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MATROS, MICHAEL J. The Man Who Came Back From the Dead. (1972)
Directed by: Fred Chappell. Pp. 61.

These are short pieces concerned with secret visions.

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following
committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the
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INTRODUCTION

incontrammo d'anime una schiera,
che venia lungo l'argine

The man who came back from the dead told us
the pitch, the great brown pitch is the most of it,
for it's as tar, nor hot nor cool though, but thick as tar
and never giving you up

My sister is two years older than I, but the two years
were more then. We were both in blue jeans; mine were cuffed
in wide folds. The man who came back from the dead sold pro-
duce at the open-air market on Freeman Street. I especially
remember the sour, firm wine-grapes that attracted most of the
yellow-jackets.

My sister tested some fruit. "We'd like these two pears,
please."

The man pulled them up gently with his brown hand and
placed them in a fragile, wrinkled bag that carried random ink
markings. Later I found dried stem and leaf fragments at the
bottom, with the pears.

It was in the summer of her ninth, my seventh birthday.

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ALICE

Alicia, anvil-breasted, wither at your looking glass.
Torment flies from my fingers, wrenching once, stroking the
corpse, hard between the breasts.

"Did you say something?"

"I was asleep." His hands cradle his head on the hotel
pillowcase where wakefully he continues to ponder.

She calls again from the bathroom. "You shouldn't be
sleeping. You should be getting ready. I thought it was the
woman who was always late."

Sun tears through; the laser shaft strikes Paul. Paul
with ankles crossed on the hotel bed wishes Alice dead by his
own hand. Her work actually, he considers. Now we're the
same person, Paul; that's what marriage does. That's right,
Honey. And so, your honor, we have geometrically proved that
the decedent, Alicia Anvil-Breasted, did indeed, of her own
free will and with just cause, rip the being from those clammy
tits.

"I just have to put on a tie, Honey." Her throat runs
smokily at his inner eye. A quick, tight four-in-hand, maybe.
From behind.

"Well then, you shouldn't be lying around in your suit."
She swirls in, Loretta Young. "Oh hell, have you seen my
rings?"

"Your rings? I thought you were never supposed to take
them off."

"I was putting on hand lotion. Anyway, I take them off all the time when I do dishes."

He leans at his shoelaces. "You know we're not married in the sight of the Lord unless you're wearing them. Summon the house detective and tell him there's an unmarried woman indecently exposed in my chamber."

"Goddam it, Paul, where'd you put them? I've got to finish getting ready."

"Well might I imagine your haste. When the Sheraton's finest apprehends you there is no recourse to excuse, my pretty."

"Goddam it, do you have them?"

Them, them, thu-em. No lady, I don't havum. Or them, either. "I assure you, my darling, that I did not purloin your baublery. You may search me, fondling as you go."

"Well help me look for them."

Paul reflects that when one is forty, three years of marriage is insignificant, almost reversible.

"Having lobster tonight, eh, Paul? I like your bib," says the other man.

"I know, isn't that tie the most absurd thing you've ever seen?" Alice says, "I keep telling him."

"Yes, Alice, you do. What discerning taste," says Paul. Paul grins at the other wife. Speak, Sheba, Brooklyn-throated ruby bird.

"You know, I've never been to Washington before. Do you know what's on top of the Capitol? We drove through the parking lot thing today."

"Pigeon droppings, perhaps?"

"No, Paul. You know, the statue."

"I don't know," confesses Alice. "Isn't that funny, after seeing so many pictures of it!"

"It's an Indian. Just like a goddam cigar store Indian," Harry now, the other man. "I woulda' thought it'd be Washington or Lincoln or somebody."

Paul faces the woman, folds his hands. "Oh, I thought you knew. That's not a statue. During the great Cherokee purges in Kentucky they dipped one of the victims in plaster and shipped him here to stand forever, an example to other renegades. In fact, they're thinking of chopping him down and replacing him with Franklin Pierce. Not the original, of course."

"Oh, you're just making that up." Paul winks. He winks that he will face her again, pretty Pochahontas now with wet mouth now at his navel. Jackstraw legs slide away.

She smiles at the wink, smiles at Alice. "You have the cutest husband."

"Don't I, though? You should see him after he's been humored awhile." Pause, smile.

Angie is the name of the woman, Henry's wife. She and Paul have red snapper. Henry is an old friend. Angie is his

new wife whom Alice and Paul have just met while they are in Washington. Dinner is over and they have more drinks. Angie delicately sucks a paprika lemon slice. "This really isn't lady-like, is it? But I love lemons so much."

Paul slides lemon into his mouth, pops it out on his tongue, grabs it in his teeth. "You needn't worry." Paul admits that Alice still breathes toward him across the table. A regret, to be sure. But the remedy? Two hundred aspirin and call me in the morning. Because she is smoke on the water, he must dive to breathe. A red snapper stares at his blue cheeks, balloons on the wide-angle eye.

Paul's head jerks up; he watches porpoise drinkers sing the song of the humpbacked whale. Squee-squaw-bloob. Alice, a moray eel, says, "Wait until I'm finished and you can order one for both of us. It's not a contest, you know."

Paul shuts his jaws but finds hard rubber between his teeth; he strains, winces, and jerks, but, jaw muscles popping, his molars, his canines, will not mesh. His forehead again leans heavily. His mind, he feels, can unscramble, categorize, see the forest and the trees. Dead sober, these powers would evade him. In fact, sir, this uncanny prowess is to be realized only with the consumption, the ingestion of, this amber potion. Alice grips his hand on the table, faintly smiles. "I think I'll have another now, Honey." He bites again on the ice cube and spits the pieces back into his glass. "Really, I'm about to wet my goddam pants. May I leave please, Alice?"

I walk flowingly, he thinks. The corner of the table jams his thigh; sensation without pain. He might leap to the ceiling, something more than human. He pushes the men's door, but it opens toward him, brushes his nose as someone passes. Inside, another door stands before him, and one to the left. The one in the front has a knob that Paul grabs. Let me in, he growls, you fucking janitor. We're on to your tricks.

The other door has no knob, but a polished plate. Paul passes the urinals and pulls the door of a stall. He rattles it, but inside someone has it bolted. The door of the next one angles open, and he enters and locks it behind.

Now, Alicia, you lie magnified in the water, your hair curled in the sand. Your heavy breasts, now dead, drag in the current as you wait, perhaps dreaming, for your tribute. He gropes in his pocket and draws out two rings. One carries a small diamond; the other is a plain band. With his thumb, he flips them each like marbles into the bowl where they spin and jet to the bottom.

THE STORYTELLER

The trees opened at the edge of the golf course. A path began there, very wet after the rain. The boy was seven and wore stiff new blue jeans, a tee-shirt, and cowboy boots. He entered the forest and the crisp smell of the soaked pine. Now he was hidden from the golfers. Invisible, he peeked out. Then he turned and walked farther into the woods. It was very still. He would come away later and it would be as if no time had passed.

Soon he looked back again. The opening revealed a flash of green and blue without depth, a movie screen behind trees. He was protected from the sky. His hands in his pockets, he kicked into the earth with his steps, sending wet clumps of pine needles and leaves from the ground. He came to a big tree with its bark split. He dug into the wound with his fingers to gain a hold. They slipped from the bark unable to catch it, but, finally, he managed to pull some away from the slick flesh of the tree. The split continued into the wood a few inches and the boy decided that lightning had hit it, with no one around for miles, and he was the first to discover it. He wondered if the tree could feel him peeling away its skin. When there was no more he could tear off, he picked up a long strip of the discarded bark and began to walk farther up the path, whipping the earth.

The path was almost straight back, away from the golf course. Maybe there were deer farther along who would not be

afraid of him, but would feed from his hand and lead him to secret meadows. He stopped again. At a bare spot off the path was a hole the size of a quarter surrounded by a tiny lip of wet dirt. He had been told that these were snake-holes. He found a stone and dug some dirt loose around the hole to fill it with so the snake could not be waiting for him on his way back.

"Are you sure that's enough dirt? Those things are deep." The voice scared the boy. He jumped from his crouch and faced the man beside him. It didn't occur to him to say anything; instead, he stood still but resolute against the invader. The man he faced was in a green bathrobe. His thin legs stuck downward in polka-dotted pajamas. He was much younger than the boy's father. "Anyway, how do you know the snake's down there? It is a snake, isn't it? He's probably out at work and when he comes home and sees his hole filled up he'll wait around to try to catch whoever did it. Doesn't the offender always return to the scene of the crime?"

"What's a 'fender?"

"A criminal. Somebody who ruins people's nice houses that they spent days digging."

"Why are you wearing your p.j.'s?"

"Oh, I always wear my p.j.'s. It's the style where I come from."

"Where do you come from?"

The man turned and looked up the path. "You go up that trail there 'til you come to the river. There's an old boatman there who takes you across for a nickel. Then, when you're on the other side, you have to start running through the poppy fields. Those are big red flowers. But if you slow down to pick any, the smell will make you go to sleep and you'll never wake up. Why, just today there were two new skeletons. You know what a skeleton is?"

"Yeah, it's bones. I was one on Hallowe'en."

"Well, after all that, is the house I live in. It's as big as a castle and a lot of interesting people live there. Some are prisoners and have to stay, but others, like me, just live there because they like it. And everybody wears pajamas. Where do you live?"

"In Halton. We're on a trip. My daddy's playing golf over there."

"Is he a good golfer?"

The boy looked down, embarrassed. "I don't know."

The man knelt and picked the wet pine needles from a spot in the path. Then he found tiny twigs and broke them into different lengths. Placing them on the earth he devised two identical figures. Then he fashioned a triangle, a skirt, over one and looked up. "What's your name, or do you have a name?"

"David."

"Do you like stories, David?"

"Some of them. I don't like the same stories my sister likes."

The man's hand came clasped from his pocket. "Would you like to hear a story about this?" As he opened his fist a locket fell out, suspended by its gold chain. "It's a watch," he said as it twirled, "See?" The boy nodded.

The man in the bathrobe began, indicating the female stick figure. "It once, a very long time ago, belonged to this lady, a fine woman, whose father had given it to her. It meant so much to her that she decided to hide in its secret back the sole photograph of her son who had mysteriously vanished." As the man spoke, he twisted the chain between his thumb and forefinger. "This very watch, then, with what it contained, was the most precious of the beautiful lady's possessions. That's why she was so horrified to find it missing one morning. Nothing else was gone from her house, only the watch."

"The police could find no clues," he continued, "and they advised her to give up her search, but she would rather have died than to face the loss. So she turned to detective agencies. Her description of the watch and photograph lacked nothing"--he brought his hand under the hanging watch and, with his thumb, indicated a flaw for the boy--"even to this tiny scratch. They hunted and hunted, spending thousands of pieces of her silver, but they had to report failure to the grieving woman."

The man paused, tracing in the dirt around the other stick figure as the boy waited intently. Finally he went on. "That's where he comes in. The despair of the woman was known far, farther than the boundaries of her own country, and a mysterious stranger approached her one day. He was very much like any other man, but over his head was draped a green velvet hood with holes only for his eyes and nose. 'I can help you, Madam,' said he, 'with my special talent. The nose upon my face can detect hidden gold.' 'Oh, good sir,' prayed the woman, 'give me your help, and I'll gladly pay you all that you ask.' 'I request nothing more, kind lady,' he replied, 'than the treasure hidden within, the photograph of your son.' 'Oh, please,' she cried, 'ask anything of me but that. My dear son is vanished and I have no other image of him.' 'Those are my terms,' countered the man in the velvet hood, 'I will accept nothing less.' Well, that good woman worried and wondered and finally decided that if he indeed could locate her watch, then she might offer him so great a reward that he would return the picture as well. So, she sent him off." The man in the bathrobe paused again and smiled as if he were finished.

The boy grew impatient. "Did he ever find it? How'd you get it?"

"I can only tell you what I know, David, and that's what I heard from the lips of the man himself. About how he searched in that city and all the others in the land and

finally in desperation came to the forest to see if he could find an answer among the trees. That's where I saw him in that terrible mask and that's how I know." The man in the bathrobe rose and stalked along the path past the boy, who twisted around to follow with his eyes.

"It was your snake-hole, David, that hole right there where he found it with the snake curled around it ready to strike. I was here, hidden behind this tree and I saw him reach in his fingers--the man stooped over the snake-hole and pushed in two fingers--"and then, zip, he'd fallen back with the watch and a snakebite in his hand." The man jerked away, then stopped and rose and approached David.

"I came over to see if I could be of any help, but he said, 'No, don't go for a doctor, just hear my tale.' So he told me then what I've told you now, but when I asked where I might deliver the watch, he struggled to tell me but gave up, dead. I dug a grave and buried him, still masked, and I've kept the watch to this day, alone able to view the photograph for which a heartbroken woman would sell her soul." The man in the green bathrobe bent over and held the back of the watch inches from the sitting boy's face. His cracked thumb-nail twisted up and brought down the golden plate.

The boy stared amazed at the faded brown image. Slowly, carefully, he said, "It's you."

The man drew back his hand and closed the watch in his fist. "It's going to be dark soon, David. I should go if I

expect to get back tonight. All right?" The boy looked up, not answering. The man said, "Good-bye, now," and reached down to push the boy's dark hair from his eyes, then he turned and walked up the path.

The boy sat still, his legs bowed in front of him. He picked the damp earth with a stone, occasionally glancing up until the man disappeared past a wall of black trees at a curve in the path. He stared at the sticks a moment; then he gathered them and put them into his pocket as he stood up. He wandered back past the wounded tree to the edge of the woods. He broke into a hard run across the golf course.

SIN

A slash of natural light cut through but disappeared. Then, painfully, the door opened straight in for inches and suddenly swung too fast, circling toward him while the old lady lifted her slender white cane scuttling over the corner of the granite step. The door pulled to a rubber stop by the desk. "Oh," she cried, quite silently. His partner's tender masculine monotone answered, "Hello, Miss Rodinbeau, I'll get that." His scent passed close with a wisp of breeze as he went across to the door. As the latch clicked shut a bird-song fell through, but there was no park nearby.

"These warm days are what keep me alive, Mr. Farmer, and at home through the window I imagine a bumblebee over every flower. What are they now?"

"Only a few crocuses so far, Miss Rodinbeau. Yellow crocuses just come through. Course there aren't too many near the museum. Just those skinny birches out there in the sidewalk."

"Not broad enough for birchbark canoes, I suppose. Do you ever go canoeing, Mr. Farmer?"

"No, not for years, since I was a boy, I guess. My sons have an aluminum canoe, but I haven't been in it."

From the desk he saw Miss Rodinbeau step to one of the great marble columns. She was in a red flowered dress with a vinyl yellow belt. A yellow pillbox slanted, pinned to her hair. "It's so warm in here." Her voice rose in the

large hall; it seemed to pulsate to the balcony and hang on the marble rail that was planted there.

"I know. It is. But there's no air conditioning until June."

"Yes, and then we'll have a cold snap and the air conditioning will be humming along like mad, frosting over all the glass."

Mr. Farmer sighed, agreeing, and at the desk, he himself laughed lightly.

"Oh, is that Mr. Reiner?" she asked. There was a pause.

"No, I'm new--Miss Rodinbeau?" The last word formed a question.

"That's right, Rodinbeau. It's French," she answered, "but, then, I don't suppose it could be anything else, could it? My father considered himself a refugee Huguenot." The marble column looked very cool, and, at the center of the hall, distant. She hung her cane on her arm and pressed her palms and cheek to the absolutely smooth surface.

She seemed a listener at the stone. "It's a beautiful marble. A rose," he said. He imagined a machine that could shave the grainy marble so precisely.

"Wherever do they find so much of it?" she said, "They are such huge pieces of stone."

"I really don't know, do you, Mr. Farmer?"

"Tennessee," he answered. "Most of your marble comes from Tennessee."

"Tennessee," she said. "I believe that's the first word I ever learned to spell. And Mississippi, of course. Four eyes. I'm sure everyone knows Mississippi by the time he's four."

Mr. Farmer spoke. "Miss Rodinbeau, this is David Amundsen. He came in last week. Would you like for him to take you around today?"

"Oh yes, very much. Would you mind, Mr. Amundsen? I'm sure it's not very interesting describing everything you see to an old blind woman."

"I'd enjoy it. I haven't seen the museum well myself anyway. That's a confession."

"It certainly is."

"Well, it hasn't been a week since I came." He pushed back his chair, scraping so she could surely hear it and know he was coming to her. As he approached, he somehow expected her to cringe at his hand's gentle pressure on her elbow, but she smiled. Her glasses' darkened lenses radiated something to him that was not a warning, only perhaps sinister. He was not sure that if, without knowing, he had seen those eyes through their dark glasses he could perceive the blindness, or understand it. Her eyes were cool and vague; their presence demanded that they provide some service, but he did not know what that could be.

"Miss Rodinbeau likes to go through the new exhibitions to find out what we have up. She was an artist herself once.

Isn't that right?"

"An artist? Oh, no. I told you I worked a bit, just a bit, while I still had my sight. I was merely a student then--and perhaps not so talented, I'm afraid. What's hanging, Mr. Amundsen?"

"Graphics. European graphics. Twentieth century. Some nineteenth."

"Well, let's go see what's there," she said.

The stairway began at their left, past a broad range of the flat marble slabs of the floor. As they passed over, he counted the dull brass lines moving regularly under his feet, splitting the hues of the sweeping stone. The ranges of pinks and grays crossed with indefinite forms, circling into the patterns of clouds as if the young guard and his ward were treading the shimmering reflections of a lake.

There was no curve in the stairway. The same currents of stone rose in calm ascent under the shadow of the bannister, thick and solid as it grew from the molten patterns in the floor. Without touching, David and Miss Rodinbeau rapidly climbed to the top.

His hand on her elbow was a light tapping guide as he indicated with his voice the location of the first print, then others. At each of the three Matisse ink drawings she turned and paused, her gaze somehow level with them. The tiny India ink patterns spread in conflicts and vanished unfinished at the edge. His curious hand would slide from the hook of her

arm and wait anxiously. The uniform was heavy. A vague glance of bitter pears settled on his tongue. Did she know these prints as he read her their names, or was she developed in some compensating power of sense, a clairvoyant humoring those who envy her blindness?

Farther along the wall, past a Dufy and a Roualt, was a dark etching. "It's an artist's proof," he told her. "A Doré. The title--I suppose you'd call it a title--is the quote, 'He called out to Don Quixote for help.'"

"Oh, he illustrated the book, you know. Tell me what you see," she said, as if to compare his reaction with hers, more perceptive.

"It's a forest and there's a moon partly hidden past the black branches of one of the trees. Sancho Panza, it must be, has a flask or bottle in his hand and is frightened by two dead men hanging in front of him. There are others hanging behind him into the woods."

Miss Rodinbeau glared, patient, at what was the horizontal gleam in a curve on the polished handrail of the balcony. "You like Gustave Doré," she said, but it was a question.

"Yes," he answered quickly. Then he told, "My parents owned a DIVINE COMEDY with his engravings." The edition had been, with other heavy, deluxe volumes, on the under shelf of a frail table.

"They are so much more frightening than Blake's," she said.

Here, along the balcony over the main hall, the floor was a duller marble than the rest. His heels dropped gently, without intruding noise, but the smooth surface threatened to refuse his steps and fling him skating. He looked to Miss Rodinbeau's feet. She was wearing scuffed, gray nurse's shoes that would never slip on any floor. He could not guess her age. It was as if her blindness somehow removed her from any rational temporal flow. When she had walked into the museum she was older than now by many fragments of time. Her face had become smoother, tan. Perhaps the moment of her blindness was a death, or the mark of a new phase in her mortality that caused her to approach youth. The other guard would know the cause of her handicap--if it had been assumed with her growth or had arrived at some shocking instant. Blindness will follow disease, he knew. Like heat, the germ rises through a stricken body to perform a destruction that leaves the victim, not unsound, but fundamentally different from others of her species. In relief, as she turned to walk farther, he swung his hand back up to her elbow, a support for himself, as, in a sudden weakness, he must touch her for reassurance. She was a citizen of the blackness that he might only glimpse in an escaping vision.

"You know, Mr. Amundsen," said Miss Rodinbeau, "most of the work I have done, that I did as a girl--though where it is now, most of it anyway, Saint Matthew only knows--it was in these media, in graphics. Etchings mostly. Intaglio.

And woodcuts. The great pleasure, you see, is that you are never quite sure of the result until the first proof. Each image is drawn backwards, of course, and you can't know just how it will look until it's printed.

The final print in the collection was a Munch, a colored lithograph. Within the border was a girl whose hair was tomato-red ink. It was very thick and long; like a grotesque wig, a bearskin, it hung heavy over the nude torso, edging the breasts, falling in inverted flames past the high navel. The nipples, the lips, the risen eyebrows were the same dark tint. Shadows in the face, under the chin and breasts, were milder, a quiet brown. The eyelids were the clear ivory of the paper. They were drawn up over the mournful gaze of the jade-green eyes.

The image caught him in the morose drag of the familiar. He may have seen the face once or many times; it may have been the face of any, of all women, but he felt it touch him from his past. The look was questioning: will you remember? In the eyes was a loving that had broken. A passion had been torn away; already the brown and red shadow patterns surrounded the eyes as they became tearful or treacherous or mad. He tried to force a memory, a token to bring himself, by association, into her presence.

The impotent crack of light wood startled him, and he glanced to see Miss Rodinbeau guiding her cane through the door of the next gallery, poking ahead. "Won't you let me help you?" he called.

"I suppose you'd better for these last few feet," she admitted, "I'd hate to bump over any sculpture."

He realized that she was progressing, without more pauses, to the corner of silent stone and metal figures, past the solid arch announcing GALLERY FOR THE BLIND. "You needn't lead me through here," she said at the door as he escorted her ahead. "The same show was up last month. I know there's nothing in the middle to trip over."

He watched the fragile features and delicate cool gray hair pass away from him. Miss Rodinbeau walked proudly under the arch and offered her left fingers to the first of the bronzes. Cautiously, as on a blade, she followed the surface of the gleaming metal as it slid away from her in a burning golden curve.

He was an intruder here; she would feel his presence amid the shrill hum of the flourescent lights. He turned away into the main corridor and walked to the edge of the balcony. Below and across, Mr. Farmer read a magazine at his desk. There was no one else in the museum. David pressed the backs of his hands against the railing and leaned on them. There was little pressure; he hardly touched the marble, as if he were a spirit, weightless, able to step out and embrace the huge pillar that rose before him from the main floor to the vaulted ceiling. He could no longer hear the electric humming from the inner gallery. There was no sound as, in the distance of the rosy crypt, the other guard folded back

another page.

At night. There were, are again cocked angles of stairs feeding grandly into a pit. Alone he is led by the blind woman, shrieking white twisting out from the little hat. The bannisters are huge, polished. It is becoming too dark for there to be color. The handrail is a clinging gray; the steps, wooden and cement block, are filled and covered with old packed dirt that must be some dead brown. Wind collects in his tightening throat. The polished rail slides his hand through the curves. The steps are smaller; his heels are scraping, can no longer catch. They carry him gliding, breathless, reaching with spread palms to break the fall.

There is no shock in the landing. The concussion that must have come passes in the voided, unaware seconds. His legs are in front, parted, and he leans comically on his hands. Ahead is a gray light passing among scattered jade vases, cracked and irregular, stretching like cactus on the desert of the dirt floor. He sees the wall approaching; less vague, it slides nearer, but stops at a close black horizon. The gray light throbs along the floor like mist, but clear.

By his hand is a dim, golden treasure. Other obscure objects are slightly farther, trapped in the dank clay. He reaches for the gold. As he brings it close in the dark he knows it to be his father's old penknife, crusted with tarnish that melts at his fingers like dry green soot. The knife is

recognized as that which was long lost but accidentally, remarkably found in the cleaning of a desk. Now that it is his, he realizes that he has always coveted it, so, satisfied, he opens and closes the blade, then slides the knife into his pocket.

At such a distance he cannot identify any other object, so he struggles to rise and move closer. His legs though are boneless; there can be no motion, no sensation, as the cloudy figure of the old woman edges up, crouches before him. Under red hair the horrifying gaze is pity, the eyes green, so green.

SHADOWS

"I come to the garden alone."

Sung piercing within, it flew to the corner, to the car. In the back seat with Margaret he heard it. "While the dew is still on the roses."

They're going to a garden. A rose garden. He could not see it by the church, but it may have been behind. His father, driving them to their own church, started the car ahead again slowly. David's window was down and the tires rolled loud on the wet pavement. His family was not listening about the garden.

David was quiet in his hated dark-brown suit. His cap with the covered top button was tight on his head, but there should be no protest on Sunday. He crossed his arms over the glass of the window and peered at the different shining greens of the lawns. The clouds that had brought the rain were no longer in the sky.

When they arrived, his father did not shut off the engine, but waited silently while his mother, then Margaret and he, climbed out. They were too far from the curb so he stepped once quickly into the muddy gutter flow and then onto the sidewalk. The white of his shoe was stained with wet creeping spots; the brown was unchanged. Water rippled by the curb, inches deep with flashing diamonds and triangles, designs thrown through by the rapid undercurrents. The air was still cool, but the sun would dry the grass and the road

by the end of the service when his father would be back for them.

The soft brush of his mother's glove folded around his hand. He looked across the narrow street at the familiar ivied church and followed the gentle guiding pull. He refused his sister's hand as she crossed the street beside him.

There were no other children his age outside, but his friend Mrs. Minter approached. Smiling, she stooped to place her hands on his shoulders in greeting, then she rushed away to take her place at the organ. Margaret had found her own friends and his mother was speaking to someone he did not recognize, so he shook free his hand and went away to the green wooden bench. The water sat on the dark paint in perfect hemispheres. His finger through the cold drops disturbed their order, but they pulled back up into shining bubbles.

Rolling from inside, the first of the mournful organ tones reached his ears. He felt his mother come up behind him. "Take off your cap, darling," she said, "we're going inside now." She did not take his hand this time but again he refused his sister's as they stepped into the entranceway. On the desk beneath the bulletin board was the register, scribbled with names in different inks. Beside it was a stack of lace fragments. Margaret lifted one and pinned it into her hair.

They came in under the choir loft and his mother and sister crossed themselves from the font. Father Beale, immense

in black, strode by. David's eyes followed the man to the far dark rear corner of the narthex, to the hidden steps which took him up swiftly into the hardwood floor of the loft. David turned again and walked with the two women. He heard the weary scraping of a rope on wood as the bell began its low toll high above the giant platform. However, the only sound as they passed under the carved wooden arch, from the close shadows to the lighted pews, was the dull echo of the ancient organ.

Small, heavy, green cushions were hooked before them in their pew. His mother reached for his, but he took it from her hands and placed it himself. Between the two women he prayed for them, prayed that they might find the garden in the song together. Then he remembered that you must go there alone. Their garden at home was very small beside the secure bricks of the house, but there were roses. He often helped pull out weeds. The garden in the song would be very much bigger and other flowers and trees would grow with the roses and he would be there alone.

David and his mother lifted themselves and sat while Margaret remained praying. When the procession entered, the congregation stood and he bowed with the others as the cross came past. The music had changed; he could not read well enough yet to sing the words in Margaret's red hymnal. He looked back, up into the choir loft where Mrs. Minter directed the singers with vigorous nods. As she peered out over the

congregation, David wished she could see through the distance to his hopeful eyes.

Sunday afternoons were different days from the rest. Today there was sun and lunch in the vast green of the yard, but afterward his sister went away swimming with friends, and his parents napped and read.

In his own room it was as quiet as all Sundays. The occasional sounds from outside were isolated, trapped in the pillowing silence--the single bark of a dog or the slap of a basketball dribbled down the sidewalk by an older boy. David sat cross-legged on the floor with his crayons, drawing masses of tiny flowers and trees, a slender path twisting through on the thick cream paper of his pad. The air outside was still, but David imagined the play of breeze in his drawing. In motion, the leaves of his trees were thrown together, ranges of unshaded greens.

From the next room came the quiet voice of his mother. David heard her quick steps down the hall and the tap of her fingernails as she pushed open the door behind him. "I have to go to Church for the Guild, David," she said, "do you want to come? It's a pretty day."

It was warm now, bright, as they drove. When the signal stopped them at the church where he had earlier heard the singing, he stared quietly. There was no one in front, and

no sound came from inside. The sun glared off the windows so he could not see through. The church was much newer than his. It was wooden, painted white.

When they arrived, there were no other cars parked on the street except Father Beale's in front of the rectory. He followed his mother past the front door, along the concrete balcony under the tilting green-stained windows, to the side entrance, the door to the rear chambers. Looking through the iron railing he saw the field where he had hunted colored eggs a few weeks before. Beyond was a thick ivy patch and, in the shadow of a dogwood, the white marble cross. Jesus was on the side away from David, hidden.

His mother knelt to his height and said, "You don't have to come in if you don't want to, honey. I just have to straighten up the robes and the altar. Don't you want to stay outside?"

"All right," he answered. She kissed his cheek and he turned and walked back along the balcony to the courtyard and the front door. It was closed, but he climbed onto the stoop and tugged at the black iron handle. The door pulled open and David stepped in quickly, walking through the entranceway, stopping just inside the chapel.

Still it was darker under the choir loft than forward where two tall white candles burned on the altar and a dim glow spread up the tapestry behind. Sunk in the brick walls were the textured green-stained windows, crossed into diamonds

by lead molding. The lower halves of them all were tilted open, tiny black chains hanging off. The sun shone through onto the polished oak pews, but it did not brighten the narthex, where he stood.

The floor--he knew it was very old--was bare wood, scuffed and shined by countless Sundays of other feet and his own. St. Joseph, fragile on his pedestal, stood high above him motionless, guarding the archway where the aisle began. The smooth blind eyes were remote. David could not understand that the saint could be the same now, when only he was present, as in the morning, but the tilt of his head, the gently parted lips through the rough hewn beard, gave no sign of recognition.

David came around the statue along the huge carved screen that separated him from the pews. Here there were candles formed in tight blue glasses that would be too small to drink from. Six of them were arranged on a tilting wooden cross that was raised over a low table. Others were clustered around, but the only candles lighted were the three of the shorter beam of the cross. David's finger traced the fluting of a design carved in the screen. In the cushion laid by the feet of the table before him were two furrows that the light from the candles could not penetrate, for there was almost no glow at all from the tiny flames. David cupped his hand beside one and the faint ghost fluttered and echoed in the shadow.

An instant darkness caused him to look up, and he realized that a cloud he had never seen before must have stopped the sun. A quiet, deeper than before, came with the dimness that filled all the church. The candles, no longer less than the sun, grew into a newer, higher glow, and David felt a happy solitude with them in the deep sour smell of old polished wood. Then he glanced toward the stairway.

Hidden by the bannister, it rose steeply, but he had never been to that corner of the church to look up. Now he walked over and stopped, tilting his gaze up the thinly carpeted steps. They were steeper than any others he had climbed, and his hand rested high on the rail. At the top, the floor was covered over with a large faded Persian rug whose colors were gray in the dull light.

Margaret often sang here with the choir; he would turn back and see her looking only at Mrs. Minter, for she had always memorized the words. The singers' chairs were across from him now. He went over and sat on one of the cane seats. At the front edge the straws were worn lighter and thin. David picked at one that had broken loose; it scraped along his fingertip and jumped back to match the others.

As he looked to his left along the pitted brick wall at the rear, he saw the heavy, stained rope hanging straight from a boarded square hole in the ceiling. He came to it and knew that it was the rope Father Beale pulled to ring the bell. The knowledge was somehow an initiation into the

secrets of the church, such as Margaret had experienced the year before in her confirmation. "Now I'm a grown-up in the church," she had said, but here, silently, without ceremony, he was beginning to understand all that she had been taught those Sunday mornings of instruction.

The rope was thick and slightly frayed; it scratched his hands as he pulled them down it. He did not dare try to jerk it, but looked into the hole in the ceiling for the bell. There was nothing he could see through the dark, and he began to move his eyes slowly back down the rope. Halfway along was a tiny round window cut into the wall, bordered with smaller bricks. The glass seemed very thick; in the dim light the crude texture decorated the clear glass, made darker by leaves of ivy passing clustered outside. As David watched, a sudden light flickered yellow through the ivy, and a heavy drop of water landed silently to push down over the slight patterns in the glass. Soft, pulsing thunder penetrated into the choir loft.

A closer noise, from behind, caused David to turn. To see over the railing he walked up to it and rested his chin on the smooth, veined wood. His mother was at the altar, reaching to bring down the two rear silver candlesticks. Her back was turned, but David could see her blow out their flames, then tug at the wax stubbs and replace them with the longer candles. She strained to put the candlesticks back on the high rear ledge, and finally they were balanced, each behind

three others.

As she began to turn away from the altar, David pushed himself from the rail and knelt behind it, invisible. By climbing into the loft he had not disobeyed, but he cherished the quiet of his Sunday afternoon, by himself, across from the tiny window where the leaves of ivy danced under the rain outside. He sat alone, his back to the railing, an arm's reach away from the organ. Like a tame, sleeping animal, the instrument rested quietly, breathing none of the frightening tones of morning. David moved closer. The cracked ivory keys were uncovered, and he looked along their rounded, jutting edges. Below, where Mrs. Minter's feet would be, were the shining dark and light pedals, inches off the floor, disappearing like snakes into slots carved at the base. David placed his hand on the nearest of them and followed its polished side into the darkness.

The pain he felt was so thorough that the tears had touched along his nose before he could manage to pull out his hand and the tight, sprung mousetrap on his fingers. It seemed very small, but he did not know immediately how to release it, so he stood quickly and looked to the altar. His mother, folding a linen cloth, swam dwarfed in the distant vision behind his tears, and he decided, as his fingers began to pry at the fierce metal bar, that she must not know his shame.

SECRETS

The rows of windows blacken, stung dead by the lightning. Shining in the flashes, the acres of brick-red roof roll to the edge and lean over the topmost windows to guard them from the first of the heavy drops. His elbows sore against the grass, someone watches up the fairway, past the gazebo and the tennis courts, to the black holes that are windows in the great wall. As the thunder drops away the lights shine out again, powerful against the gray castle.

The watcher lies naked on the mown grass, no longer cool against his body. He looks to the right edge of the giant hotel, waiting for a figure to appear, to cut the rectangle of light in the center of his vision. Finally a black silhouette slices the yellow. Its tiny arms pull up and clutch the fragile curtains that are drawn on the other windows to diffuse the glare. The young man in the grass wants to call to her that the rust-colored drainpipe runs close by, swiftly to earth. It is very near; she could reach it.

It is a moment before she realizes where he should be, down over the great striped canvas awning and the plateau of tennis courts, beyond the granite red-roofed shelter. There she may have seen a slight, pale figure against the black grass--she cannot be certain. It seems to roll slowly to the edge of the trees, no, it is the same, a spot of mist, a tiny cloud clutching its few feet of earth. She has touched that spirit, her legs sliding across the cold grass.

Below, the white figure kneels, examining his elbows where grass is sunk like fossils. If you kiss your elbow your sex changes. He alone has always been able to, and now he does, not for metamorphosis, but as one of his frequent charms, a token to unseen visitors that always surround him. A great number of them are well-wishers, subtle, guiding influences who have, he supposes, once been incarnate like himself. But there are those who gaze more closely at his intense moods. Often they snicker, as now at the girl, and he hates their presence, these voyeurs who gather like eager students in a surgical amphitheater. Usually he jokes and wagers with them all, betting thousands on the next person's shoe color. And at appropriate times, as now, he honors them with a slight, private gesture--kissing his elbow, or pairing his footsteps to satisfy their passion for even numbers. Now too he registers in pairs the thick drops that thrust through his hair and splash cold on his shoulders. As the dense heat breaks, he drops back his head and opens his mouth. Raindrops fall to the back of his throat and into his open eyes.

After a moment, something smooth and wet begins to slide by his knee. He is afraid to move; a snake will wander by him innocently if he does not breathe. But this is slow, so much that it lingers, sticking against his skin, and he raises his head to look down at the hideous green-and-black body. The slug's antennae waver as it gropes past the tight skin of the young man's knee. He scoops it into his hand and

feels the awful crawling. He drops a ball of spit on it and watches it curl in agony from the salt, but the spit dissolves in a sticky secretion and the slug inches through it, up his closed fingers. Finally it comes to an edge and falls into the grass, but the young man reaches down and folds it into a loose fist. He stands and throws the creature hard at the gray building.

Through his window the rain turned the morning dark. Its pleasant, nostalgic tap on the glass near his face woke him at seven-thirty, hours earlier than usual. His dream clung to his mind where he rolled with a girl to the edge of a curling roof that hung miles above the grass. He watches her fall endlessly. Now the raindrops skidded down the glass into the cracked molding. He pushed his cheek against the cold window in relief from the dream.

He was on the green bedspread of his made bed, not turned down since spring. In the big room there were two old chairs, deep-brown with frayed arms that pointed to the bare desk by the other window. Across was a tiny hall that connected in three steps with the kitchen.

The dream left him awake. His hand was heavy against the fragile glass. He felt his chest where the hair was lying in sweat; a drop slid down his side, inched around to his back. He rubbed his elbow against it. A brown-shingled gable stretched out below him above a downstairs window. On a torn

branch that lay there the leaves jumped with rain.

The road shone in the sunlight that threatened the dying rain. The last drops hit the glistening surface as if to bore into the asphalt and leave it cratered with crusty pits. Slanting down the hill against the curb were the cars that would stay late because it was Saturday.

There was an old blonde Motorola console record player by the head of the bed. It had once been in his father's room; the lid was scarred by cigarettes and by moisture from many glasses. One triangular patch, dark under the veneer, he remembered from the times he had folded himself up in the hard armchair and watched his father with the records.

The young man reached inside to the gray felt turntable and pushed it around, his finger pressed gently against it. He searched in the record storage compartment and pulled out a 78 rpm Gershwin album. He played the second side of RHAPSODY IN BLUE and the short STRIKE UP THE BAND. He nodded in time to STRIKE UP THE BAND, and he drummed on his knees. He listened to the rapid spin of the turntable when the records were finished, then played the other two sides of RHAPSODY IN BLUE while he went to the kitchen.

He found an orange in the refrigerator and peeled it. Most of each section was dry, but he chewed off the moist ends and ate a small bit of the peel. The milk still smelled fresh, and he drank the last inch from the carton.

In the other room he dressed in khaki work pants and a blue denim shirt. Rolling up the sleeves, he went into the bathroom and looked in the mirror. There were two days of whiskers on his face so he drew off the shirt and shaved quickly, cutting himself on the jaw, just up from his chin. The blood sprouted slowly from the tear and he wiped it with his palm. It spread like thin water-color on his skin. The bright drops formed back on the cut; he wet some tissue and pressed it to the wound. It was a cold pain, but when he lifted it the bleeding stopped. The paper in the toilet turned the water barely pink, like watermelon juice.

He went to his bed and looked at the red sun over the mountains. Again the sun called him as it did always after a rainy sleep, to start up to the highest, the middle peak, to push through the wet leaves up the shifting rise. But the dusk was only an edge in his thoughts--the sun shut off by those same leaves, struggling into a soaking darkness, not sleeping on the climb but seeking the glow that would spread maybe again faint then brighter through the trees onto his shoulders, gasping when the cold black assaults him and pushes into his throat. Then his ethereal companions will gather about his dying consciousness, teasing like gnats.

There was a new topping of asphalt at the intersection in the community where they drove about noon. The insistent

vulgar smell of the hot road climbed into the windows of the borrowed car when they slowed by the supply company, the general store into whose parking lot farmers carelessly edged their trucks. He told her that he has come out here for as many years as he can remember, with his father for fishing long ago or, later, on a bicycle. As they drove away from the store he pointed to the bait shop where they had always bought minnows and worms.

"How old were you when your father died?" she asked.

"Twelve," he said.

The road began to curve as they approached the mountain. The fog no longer smothered the tiny trails that split the deep pine forests high away from them. There were no more stores. A trailer that was a post office sat under its empty flagpole in a dirt parking lot. There were farms that sloped away for miles from the road on one side; on the other were houses perched on a low dirt cliff that had been cut away for the highway. The young man's voices teased him now, asked how old the girl was, where they were going, for what. They struggled against him for the steering wheel and tossed hair into his eye. As the road leveled and became straight for a mile-long start to the mountain, he slowed and turned onto a hard dirt road, a wide path that slanted quickly into the woods from the paved road. He drove carefully in

the two trenches that directed his tires. In a half-mile they were at the lake. It was enclosed by the forest that came to the edge except where the road opened into a wider area of hard sand grown over with grass.

"I've never seen anyone here during the week," he told her.

"Do a lot of people fish here?" she asked.

"No, but it's stocked. The people who own it swim here on the weekends. My father knew the owner. That's why he let us fish here." Across the lake a frog yelled and splashed into the deep-green water. They undressed, then curled their feet against stones and walked to the edge.

A water spider skipped across his bubbles; he broke the plane, his colorless, dull mass through the translucent, weed-green water rising like a dolphin at the spider, becoming browner, white, then brown when his shoulders pushed his head into the air. Alone, his feet kicking in the cold, he backed himself in a tiny circle. Something trapped his ankle; he bobbed to his nose, sank to punish her, but she sprinted away deep. Her feet lashed at his eyes. Then she needed air and shinnied up to the light that spread green over the cold blackness. He followed, climbed her legs; his lips trailed the skin at the back of her knee, up, then circled to the dimple in her back. He pushed away and into the air, his hand at his eyes, throwing away hair. He grinned and went

back under. When he rose again she splashed him, then turned to hear the shout; another shout echoed the first, but softer, farther, fading in the cracking branches. He laughed, watching her sink, but he had been on that bank, in those wet trees, shouting from the edge at other, earlier swimmers, then pushing back up the slopes through slashing pine needles and thin whips of thorns. They heard the boys yell again, now farther. The young man threw himself through the water toward the shore and onto the hard sand where weeds matted up stiff under his feet. He ran to the car and pulled on the khaki pants.

"Where are you going?"

"I think I know where they went."

"Where?"

"Just a place I think I know where they'll be."

"Hey, forget about it. I don't want to be here alone."

"It'll be just a minute. It's over that hill there."

He pointed to the bank of trees. "There's nobody else around."

The voices had come from across the pond but the young man ran into the woods at his right. There was no path; the thorny vines tripped him and the needles on the white pine branches brushed his face with their sting and their piercing smell. He ran for the path that curved around from behind the wooded hill across the pond. Years ago someone, he did not know who, chopped this tiny road through the trees. Since then the woods had been scorched by a fire quickly drowned by

rain. Two huge blackened trees lay across the path, but new impediments like pine saplings were pulled away so the invisible keeper might proceed unaccosted through his forest. This is where the young man would once ride his bicycle, silently but for a creak in the chain and the whisper of the tires over the pavement of brown pine needles. Now he hurried through the groping branches to intercept the intruders as they raced, maybe on bicycles, toward the station to which he also struggled.

When he arrived, there was a dense silence in the humid air of the forest. Either they had come by or he must wait to catch them if they were to come this way. He remembered the spot. The path widened to surround a blackened tree trunk broken off five feet up. The rest of the tree was still attached by unyielding fibers at the break, but it slanted downward as it stretched away into the forest. The young man imagined a high-wire performer pedaling his unicycle along the singed bark, avoiding the stumps of shorn branches, his hands locked to his waist.

It was still quiet after a few minutes so the young man crossed the path and entered the trees at the other side. Here there were fewer of the small, furry white pines. Among the singed trunks were other trees that seemed to have escaped the fire. Their higher branches bloomed with the lively green of leaves in the sun. He began to descend the hill that slanted to the stream. The thorny vines became thicker as he first

heard the rush of water, not before him, but echoing from trees on each side as if it were dropped whirling from the sky.

The stream soon became distinguishable by an invisible wall above it in whose plane no trees grew. In a minute the young man had stopped at the level edge. Here it was narrow but deep, so deep that no rocks rose to divide the onslaught of the flow. Then he looked up. Until then he had not realized how near the mountain he was. The forest rose even more steeply on the other side to a crest where there was a slight leveling, then another slope began. He had thought the mountain had started behind him, a mile away. He imagined that this must be a foothill, an introduction to the giant vertical tree-covered face that he saw in the morning from his window. Now he felt bewildered, lost. His gnat-like voices began to pester him again. Some advised him to start the climb up the mountain that he had so often envisioned at morning. The trees were thick--he would have to proceed alone, slowly. One voice realized how dark it was, how far from the sun it seemed, so different from the warm light that washed it at morning. Then the young man noticed how breathless he was. He decided to climb back to check the path, then return to the pond where he had left the girl. There he could lie at the shallow edge of the water and regain his breath. As he started to turn, he saw a movement of dull white upstream through the trees. He watched for it again, but it had disappeared.

If this were a bird, it was the only one he had seen so close, away from the tops of the trees. Barefoot, he walked along the wet, sandy edge of the stream a few steps toward the vision. Then, past the curve in the stream, stooping behind an undergrowth of vines was a man. He was not hiding, but was reaching into the stream. The young man walked closer, the water now rushing over his feet. When he saw the white-haired man look up, he was startled. The vision was like a photograph of his father, one that had been taken during a fishing trip. This man, too, was small and the resemblance was so great that it seemed strange he did not wear his father's fishing cap. But the man bent over here was older. When he looked up his eyes seemed more sunken than those of the photograph. The smile was slanted. It surprised the young man that the voice was pitched so high.

"Hello, there."

"Hello. I didn't see you at first. You surprised me."

"I didn't expect to see you here either." His voice was smooth, without an accent.

"What are you looking for? Did you drop something in there?"

"No, no, son, I'm looking for bait--salamanders and crayfish. They grabbed my last one just before you drove up, so I came back here to find some more. Are you swimming up there?" By the other's feet the young man saw a rusted peach can with a wire screen folded over the top.

"Yeah, we went in for awhile."

"What are you way down here for?"

"Oh, I used to come out here and ride my bicycle on the path up there. I just haven't been lately. It hasn't changed much."

"No, I don't suppose so. It's not likely to for a long time either."

The young man rolled up his pants to step farther into the stream, where the water ran cold over his calves. "I never realized the edge of the mountain was so close," he said.

"Yes, it starts here but it doesn't get too high for a long time. It levels off up there."

"Have you ever climbed it?" the young man asked.

"Oh, I've been up the old logging paths a way hunting, but I'd never just start off in woods like these. You'd be lost in a half hour. It gets awfully dark in there and there are some bears and bobcats up higher. Of course they probably wouldn't bother you, but you'd have trouble enough trying to find your way back down. Why do you want to go up there?"

"I didn't say I did, but I've thought about it. I can see the mountain from my window every morning and I'd like to be at the top."

"You wouldn't be able to look down. Still too many trees up there." The old man placed his finger on a rock in the shallow edge and slowly tipped it back. The water muddied

for a moment, but the man seemed to peer through it. His hand moved slowly over the surface and suddenly jerked down with a younger man's speed. He brought out something in his fist and put it in the can.

"I'd better get back," said the young man. "Have you got many yet?"

"Three. And a salamander."

"No, I mean fish. Are you going for bass?"

"Yes. Haven't pulled in any yet today, but there are some big ones out there."

"Yeah, I know. Good luck."

"Thank you, son."

The young man walked back downstream to the point where he entered it, turned to the hill, and climbed it as fast as he could, clutching at branches. At the path he heard the bicycles coasting away from him. Their spokes sang like insects.

SATURDAY

This is a screenplay, here timed for 14 minutes. The number of seconds listed for each shot is not arbitrary, but neither is it absolutely definite. The chief function of these times is to provide relative lengths. The abbreviations are:

CU = close up

ECU = extreme close up

FS = full shot

MS = middle shot

LS = long shot

ELS = extreme long shot

#1, 20 sec. Fade into MS of Jack, an eight year old boy, staring ahead in wonder. Dolly back slowly while he looks about as if he were placed here all of a sudden. He is on a path deep in the woods. Light filters down onto his tee-shirt and blue jeans.

CUT TO

#2, 4 sec. a stick, about three feet long, at the side of the path. Jack's hand reaches above it and picks it up.

CUT TO

#3, 20 sec. Jack playing with the stick, waving it over his

head, hitting trees, etc., as the camera tracks in front of him. He walks down the path.

CUT TO

#4, 3 sec. CU of a tree being struck by a stick.

CUT TO

#5, 10 sec. low angle shot farther along the path. Jack is in the distance, gets closer, waves the stick like a sword. As he comes onto the camera at the side of the path, only his lower legs are visible as the stick swishes through weeds in front of the camera.

CUT TO

#6, 10 sec. LS as Jack moves away from the camera and down the path, playing. He disappears behind trees at a curve in the path. Several seconds pass with no movement.

CUT TO

#7, 10 sec. CU of stick digging in the earth. Zoom out to show full shot of Jack crouched over the stick. He stops digging and looks up suddenly down the path at the camera.

CUT TO

#8, 5 sec. subjective shot down the path. There is nothing.

CUT TO

#9, 10 sec. FS from the side of the path as Jack gets up and continues walking with his stick. Pan as

he continues.

CUT TO

#10, 10 sec. LS of the front left corner of an old, unpainted cabin. In front of the cabin is a cleared area, one hundred feet square, marked with tree stumps.

PAN 180 DEGREES TO

Jack, stopped in the path as it emerges from the trees, staring straight ahead at the cabin. He holds his stick limply by his side. He is surprised and curious.

CUT TO

#11, 6 sec. CU of Jack's face. His hand comes up and brushes hair from his eyes. He breathes hard.

CUT TO

#12, 4 sec. subjective shot of the front of the cabin. The door is partly open. A small cross-cut saw leans by the entrance.

CUT TO

#13, 15 sec. side shot of Jack walking very slowly through the stumps toward the cabin. He sits on the stump nearest the cabin, his back to the door.

CUT TO

#14, 4 sec. frontal MS of Jack looking back to the path.

CUT TO

#15, 4 sec. subjective shot of the path as it enters back into the woods.

CUT TO

#16, 5 sec. stationary shot of Jack shifting himself on the stump to face the cabin. He helps himself with his stick.

CUT TO

#17, 10 sec. CU of Jack's hand breaking off wood splinters where the tree has been sawed. Dolly out to frontal MS of Jack, concerned, looking at the cabin.

CUT TO

#18, 4 sec. his subjective view of the door of the cabin.

CUT TO

#19, 20 sec. FS from the left side as Jack climbs down from the stump. Dolly out slowly as he beats on his stump, then other stumps, with his stick. Each has a different sound. Track counter-clockwise 90 degrees for LS to include cabin. Jack swings at the stumps with a baseball bat. Suddenly he stops, tired.

CUT TO

#20, 4 sec. CU of Jack breathing heavily, looking at the cabin. He wipes the hair from his eyes.

CUT TO

#21, 3 sec. LS from right side as Jack starts walking slowly toward the cabin's window, to the right of the door.

CUT TO

- #22, 2 sec. subjective shot as the window gets closer.
Glare on the glass prevents seeing through it.

CUT TO

- #23, 2 sec. LS from the right side as Jack reaches the
window and looks in.

CUT TO

- #24, 2 sec. CU of Jack's face through the window. His hand
shields his eyes from the glare and he is surprised.

CUT TO

- #25, 10 sec. inside the cabin from the wall opposite the
window. Deep focus. The top half of the frame
is the boy looking through the window. The
lower half is an ECU of the right half of David's
face as he lies on his bed facing the wall. He
is a young man, about twenty-five. His eye is
open wide; there is a vacant stare on his face.
Finally he blinks.

CUT TO

- #26, 4 sec. CU of Jack looking through the window.

CUT TO

- #27, 7 sec. subjective shot of the inside of the cabin.
David is lying on a low army cot with his back
to the boy. In a fireplace to the left is
burnt wood. To the right is a card table with

a half-done jigsaw puzzle on it. One chair is pulled up to it. A kerosene lamp sits on a corner of the table.

CUT TO

#28, 10 sec. LS from Jack's right as he leaves the window and goes back to his stump. He sits down.

CUT TO

#29, 4 sec. MS of Jack looking at the cabin, hands under his chin, leaning on his stick.

CUT TO

#30, 8 sec. LS from the right as Jack eases up off the stump and goes to the door to look in.

CUT TO

#31, 8 sec. subjective shot of the cabin's interior. David's position is unchanged. Pan left to the fireplace, then right to the table.

CUT TO

#32, 5 sec. exterior LS from the right at Jack, looking in the door. He turns and walks back out toward his stump.

CUT TO

#33, 8 sec. same shot as #25, but Jack is no longer in the window. David blinks twice. There is the sound of Jack beating on the stumps.

CUT TO

#34, 15 sec. LS from the right as Jack swings at the stumps.

slowly stepping up the tempo and the force as the camera tracks 180 degrees, passing between him and the path, ending in LS from the left.

CUT TO

#35, 4 sec. frontal MS of Jack facing the cabin, looking worried.

CUT TO

#36, 4 sec. subjective shot of the cabin. It is too dark within to see through the door. There is the sound of Jack's breathing.

CUT TO

#37, 5 sec. LS from the left as Jack once more approaches the door, dragging his stick.

CUT TO

#38, 4 sec. FS of the door from the inside corner opposite it. Jack suddenly appears, having approached from an angle. He looks at the cot and, surprised, looks up toward the camera. He stands shocked and drops his stick.

CUT TO

#39, 5 sec. Jack's subjective view of David standing by the end of the cot in the corner, grinning.

CUT TO

#40, 5 sec. David's subjective view at Jack as he recovers, embarrassed, and picks up his stick.

CUT TO

#41, 20 sec. MS of David grinning. Dolly out as he walks to the chair, turns it to face the door, and sits smiling, crossing his legs. Dolly in a circle behind David to shoot Jack at the door looking down at his feet. Stop tracking with the back of David's head in the foreground and Jack to the left at the door. Slow zoom to MS of Jack as he looks back up.

CUT TO

#42, 10 sec. subjective MS of David at the table. He puts his legs under the table and begins working on the jigsaw puzzle. The smile gradually disappears. After a few seconds, he looks back up inquiringly at the boy.

CUT TO

#43, 4 sec. subjective FS of Jack scraping his stick on the rough floor. He looks up for a...

CUT TO

#44, 3 sec. ...subjective shot of David as he smiles again.

CUT TO

#45, 10 sec. MS of Jack deciding what to do. Dolly out past David working on the puzzle. His left side is in the foreground toward the camera as Jack watches. Finally the boy, still with his stick, approaches the table, stops, and pushes his finger shyly among the puzzle pieces.

CUT TO

#46, 75 sec. rear MS with Jack in the foreground. David looks up at Jack, smiles again, looks at the pieces near the boy's hand, and examines them for the right one. Dolly out to stationary FS as Jack sits down on the floor with his legs crossed and stares at David. David, who cannot find the correct puzzle piece, slaps his hands onto his thighs, pauses in decision, then pushes his chair back and rises. He walks to a small table upscreen and opens the single drawer. He rummages inside and finally finds a ball of string. He draws a knife from his pocket and cuts off about ten feet. He walks over to Jack, bends over and gently takes the boy's stick. He ties one end of the string to an end of the stick and rolls the string onto it. Jack watches quietly.

FADE OUT

FADE INTO

#47, 10 sec. water reflecting the sky. Tilt up slowly across the surface of the narrow lake to a long, soft-focus shot of Jack and David fishing. David, to the boy's left, has a bamboo pole. Jack has his stick with the string attached. Each is intent on the point at which his line

breaks into the water.

CUT TO

#48, 4 sec. CU of a short, thick stick lying on the water. String curves up from it.

CUT TO

#49, 8 sec. MS as Jack watches the water intently. Dolly out to include David in a similar pose beside him. Jack looks at him, then back at the water.

CUT TO

#50, 6 sec. CU of the stick on the water. Suddenly it bobs twice, then shoots under the water.

CUT TO

#51, 4 sec. full two-shot as Jack, surprised, turns quickly to David, punches his arm, and indicates his own line.

CUT TO

#52, 12 sec. FS from the right as Jack jerks his line in. The empty hook swings back over his head. David lays down his pole and retrieves the hook from a tree branch.

CUT TO

#53, 12 sec. frontal MS as David shows the empty hook and twists his face as if to say, "That's what happens." He pulls a tiny ball of bread from his pocket and puts it on the hook. He and Jack turn back to the lake.

CUT TO

#54, 10 sec. frontal FS as Jack swings his line back over the water. He pulls the bait through the water slowly--first left, then right, then he stops.

CUT TO

#55, 7 sec. CU of the stick lying on the water, bobbing over slight ripples. Tilt slowly over the lake and stop on the trees of the opposite shore.

DISSOLVE TO

#56, 10 sec. LS (one-third the width of the lake) of David and Jack fishing. Jack looks at David, who continues staring at his own line. The boy turns back forward, then again to David, who finally returns the gaze with a humorous look of apology for the poor fishing. He returns to his line and Jack follows suit.

CUT TO

#57, 4 sec. CU of Jack's float lying on the water.

CUT TO

#58, 5 sec. frontal MS as Jack looks at his line, then at David.

CUT TO

#59, 8 sec. Jack's subjective view as David sits patiently but a bit restlessly. With his free hand he scratches his other shoulder. Still watching his line, he stands up.

CUT TO

#60, 5 sec. MS of Jack turning back, scanning to the right.

CUT TO

#61, 5 sec. Jack's subjective pan of the lake and the forest to the right, ending in a stationary shot.

CUT TO

#62, 5 sec. frontal full two-shot as David sits back down.

CUT TO

#63, 5 sec. CU as the small stick on the water bobs and is pulled under.

CUT TO

#64, 3 sec. frontal MS of Jack's surprise. He turns quickly to David.

CUT TO

#65, 3 sec. subjective shot as David turns, pleased.

CUT TO

#66, 12 sec. frontal two-shot as David rises to help Jack. He steadies Jack's fishing pole to prevent his jerking the line from the water, then he helps bring it slowly up. A struggling fish rises in the foreground. The boy swings him toward David.

CUT TO

#67, 10 sec. subjective shot of David gathering in the fish and unhooking him. He holds it carefully toward Jack.

CUT TO

#68, 4 sec. medium two-shot as Jack, having dropped his

pole, tries to take the fish.

CUT TO

#69, 5 sec. CU of the fish changing hands.

CUT TO

#70, 4 sec. MS of Jack from the right (from the lake) as he takes the fish. Suddenly he jerks back his right hand and the fish falls.

CUT TO

#71, 10 sec. full frontal two-shot as David stoops to retrieve the fish, who struggles into the water and escapes despite David's efforts. Jack stoops beside David and holds out his palm with the little finger extended. David takes his hand and looks.

CUT TO

#72, 3 sec. CU of Jack's hand. There is a dark drop of blood on the little finger.

CUT TO

#73, 3 sec. MS of David smiling resignedly.

CUT TO

#74, 6 sec. MS of Jack breaking into a smile and sucking his finger. He looks toward the water.

CUT TO

#75, 5 sec. subjective shot of the water's edge. Jack's fishing stick extends partly over the water, where still there are ripples left by the fish.

CUT TO

#76, 5 sec. full frontal two-shot as David begins to remove his shirt. Jack looks on.

CUT TO

#77, 3 sec. MS of Jack watching.

CUT TO

#78, 8 sec. Jack's subjective view as David removes his boots and pants and drops them beside his shirt. He leaves on his undershorts.

CUT TO

#79, 20 sec. full two-shot as David smiles at Jack and steps into the water, up to his ankles. Jack, watching, imitates by removing his shirt, pants, tennis shoes, and socks. He gingerly approaches the water's edge.

CUT TO

#80, 4 sec. CU of Jack's feet entering the water.

CUT TO

#81, 15 sec. ELS (from the opposite shore) as they both enter the water and play. David gently splashes Jack, leading to a water fight.

CUT TO

#82, 20 sec. MS as David squats under the water. Jack splashes over and sits on David's shoulders. They rise and Jack tries to stand. They wobble precariously, then fall towards deeper water.

CUT TO

#83, 15 sec. FS of Jack rising from the water, grinning and splashing. He quickly looks around, but David has not come up yet. He walks out past his waist, looking out, beginning to worry.

CUT TO

#84, 5 sec. pan of the still, reflecting water.

CUT TO

#85, 10 sec. LS from farther out in the water as Jack turns toward the shore, then back out, wiping the hair from his eyes. He turns again to shore and, worried, begins to make his way slowly. He looks toward his fishing stick.

CUT TO

#86, 4 sec. FS of the stick in its previous position, but there is no string on it.

CUT TO

#87, 10 sec. frontal MS of the bewildered Jack. Track backwards as he pushes through the water and examines his stick where the string had been. He looks along the shore.

CUT TO

#88, 6 sec. slow pan of the short shoreline, ending in a stationary shot of the earth where David's clothes and fishing pole had been, but are no longer.

CUT TO

#89, 20 sec. LS from Jack's left as he hurries onto the shore, and, still looking around, puts his clothes on his wet body, stuffing the socks into his pockets. He looks back at the stick.

CUT TO

#90, 3 sec. subjective shot of the stick.

CUT TO

#91, 6 sec. LS from the side as Jack goes and grabs up the stick, turns, and runs into a small opening in the trees.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO

#92, 20 sec. frontal MS of Jack as he stares expressionless. Slow dolly back. Far behind him is the original path through the woods. He is standing among the tree stumps in front of the cabin, close to the door. His stick hangs from his hand by his side. Continue dolly back through the door so that Jack is framed therein. Then stationary.

CUT TO

#93, 5 sec. Jack's subjective view of the cabin's interior. It is absolutely empty.

CUT TO

#94, 20 sec. MS of Jack. He turns and walks slowly back to the point where the path enters the woods. In the distance he sits down facing the cabin, his

stick across his folded legs, and stares at the cabin.

CUT TO

#95, 8 sec. Jack's long subjective view of the cabin. The cross-cut saw is gone; there is no glass in the window.

CUT TO

#96, 40 sec. CU of Jack's expressionless face. He wipes the hair from his eyes, then sucks on his little finger. As he continues this action there is a slow dolly back with deep focus toward the cabin, through the group of stumps, through the door. As the camera backs up to the rear wall of the cabin, it reveals the right half of David's face in ECU, covering the lower half of the frame. The shot is the same as #25, except that the angle is slightly shifted to include the door instead of the window in the background. The boy, a tiny image in the distance, is still visible through the door. David does not blink. The camera stops tracking and there is a slow zoom-freeze to David's eye simultaneous with a slow

FADE OUT